



HALEY BARBOUR
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DATE: October 27, 2009

**GOVERNOR BARBOUR REITERATES CONCERN OVER
COSTS OF HEALTHCARE REFORM PROPOSALS**

Jackson, Mississippi – Current healthcare reform proposals debated in the U.S. Congress would raise health insurance rates for Mississippi families and businesses and push affordable healthcare out of reach, Governor Haley Barbour wrote in a letter to Mississippi's Congressional delegation Tuesday.

An analysis by Blue Cross Blue Shield Association of a U.S. Senate Finance Committee bill shows health insurance rates increasing by an average \$3,869 for Mississippi families within five years of implementation. The cost of individual plans would rise by an average \$1,800.

"Obviously, these enormous cost increases are against the interests of Mississippi's families and small businesses," Governor Barbour wrote. "While some may criticize the fact that this analysis was done by Blue Cross Blue Shield, it is totally consistent with the history of states like New York, Massachusetts and Maine," all of which have healthcare programs with features common to the bills pending in Congress.

"If our goal is to reduce the cost of health insurance and medical care so that more Americans can afford it, this legislation is a step in the wrong direction," Governor Barbour said.

Governor Barbour's letter is attached.

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Deleted: For a small business owner purchasing new coverage, that increase would be \$1,111 for an individual employee and \$3,095 for a family. As you can see, individuals would have to pay \$150 more a month for their coverage and families nearly \$320 a month for family coverage with Baucus' bill in effect. Small businesses would pay nearly \$100 a month more for each employee and about \$250 a month extra for family coverage. ¶